

THE *Bound J. 20*
C A S E

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Arian - Subscription

CONSIDERED:

And the several

PLEAS and EXCUSES

For it particularly

EXAMINED and CONFUTED.

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C A M B R I D G E :

Printed for CORN. CROWNFIELD, Printer to
the *University*: And are to be Sold by JAMES
KNAPTON, ROBERT KNAPLOCK, in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard, and WILLIAM TAYLOR, in *Pater-*
Noster-Row, LONDON. MDCCXXI.

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CHAP. I.

*The Occasion and Design of These
Papers.*

REMARKS have been lately publish'd against a
Clause contain'd in a Bill which had been
brought into the House of Lords, for the
more effectual suppressing of *Blasphemy* and *Profaneness*.
It has been observed, among other Things, that the
Clause, being intended as a *Test* against *Arianism*,
would be of little use, or significancy as to the end
design'd by it; because Those who are now under-
stood

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stood to be *Arians*, are ready to subscribe any *Test* of that kind, containing nothing more than is already contain'd in the XXXIX Articles. The *Remarker* takes notice that Those Gentlemen make no scruple of subscribing to our Church's Forms: it is their *avowed Principle* that They may lawfully do it in their *own* sense, agreeably to what They call *Scripture*. This He proves from their declared Sentiments, not only in common Conversation but in Print; and from their constant Practice of late Years, since the Year 1712.

If This be matter of Fact (as I am afraid it is) it may be high Time to inquire, somewhat more particularly than hath been yet done, into the Case of *Subscription*. If instead of excusing a *fraudulent* Subscription on the Foot of *Humane Infirmary* (which yet is much too soft a Name for it) endeavors be used to defend it upon *Principle*, and to support it by *Rules of Art*; it concerns every Honest Man to look about Him. For what is there so vile or shameful, but may be set off with false Colours, and have a plausible Turn given it by the Help of Quirks and Subtilties? Many, without doubt, have been guilty of *prevaricating* with *State-Oaths*; But no body has been yet found sanguine enough to undertake the Defense of it in Print. Only *Church-Subscriptions*, tho' of much the same sacred Nature with the other, may be securely play'd with: and the plainest Breach of Sincerity and Trust, in This Case, shall find its Advocates and Defenders. It must indeed be own'd that the Pretences for it have not been particularly confuted, or examin'd. The reason is, because They look'd more like a wanton Exercise of Wit and Fancy (tho' it is dangerous playing with Sacred Things) than any serious Design to convince the World of the Justice of it. Besides that the Foundations of *moral*
Honesty

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Honesty were thought so deeply rooted in the Hearts of Men, that every Attempt against Them must soon fall, and die of it self. However, because the Pretences for what I call a *fraudulent* Subscription had been recommended by a Person of some Character in the learned World; and might possibly gain Ground among such as take Things *implicitly*, upon the credit of any *great Name*; I had once prepared a formal *Answer* to what had been advanced on That Head: And I designed to publish it, by way of Introduction to my *Defense*. But before my Papers were quite wrought off, There appeared a second Edition of *Scripture Doctrine* &c: upon perusal whereof, I observed that the most offensive Passage of the *Introduction*, relating to Subscription, was left out: and besides That, all Those strange and unaccountable Interpretations of the *Athanasian Creed* &c. (which had appeared in the *First Edition*) were also prudently omitted; tho' Those were all the Author had to depend on for the justifying his Subscription. Upon This, I was willing to hope that the Learned Doctor had *given*, or was *giving* up his former Principles, relating to Subscription: And I thought it would be ungenerous now to attack Him in his *weakest Hold*, after He had Himself betrayed a Suspicion, at least, that He could no longer maintain it. Wherefore I contented my self with a short Remark in my *Preface*, entring a *Caveat* only, against Any ones abusing the Doctor's Name hereafter, or Mis-pleading his Authority, in the Case of Subscription. It was not long before a nameless Writer of The Party took me up for the Charitable Suggestion I had made in Favor of the Learned Doctor. That Writer persisting in the Doctor's first Sentiments, and being very unwilling to part with so valuable an Authority, was pleased to oppose the Conjecture I had made upon the Doctor's leaving out the Passage

sage in his Introduction. *I know not* (says He) *for what Reason Doctor Clarke omitted those Words; but, I believe, I may say, it was not for the Reason Dr. Waterland insinuates viz: That such Subscription is not justifiable; because the same Thing is still asserted five or six Times, at least, in the Introduction, as corrected in the New Edition* *. I am not of That Gentleman's Mind, in This particular. Nay, if it might not look vain, I would presume, after a competent Acquaintance with the Doctor's Books, to have seen a little farther into the Turn of his Thoughts, than perhaps that Writer has done: And, with his good Leave, I will still retain the same Opinion of the Doctor's good Sense, and Integrity so far, which I had when I wrote my *Preface*. I think, I could give a tolerable Account of the Doctor's not striking out every Passage in his *Introduction* that look'd that way: And likewise of his great Reserve and Caution, in not telling the World, plainly, that He had changed his Mind. However, if I mistake, I am sure it is on the candid and charitable Side; and on That which must appear much more for the Doctor's Honour (with all Men of Sense) than persisting in a *Error*, ever can be. That it is an Error, and a very great one, I mean to show in these Papers: And tho' I must, in appearance, carry on a Dispute against the Learned Doctor, because the *Objections*, for the most part, must be produced in *his Words*; Yet I would be understood, in reality, to be rather disputing This Point with the Doctor's Disciples, who lay a greater Stress upon what He has said, than Himself now seems to do; thereby making his *First Thoughts theirs*, after they have (as I charitably conceive) ceased to be *his*. I shall have no Occasion to say Any thing in Defense of

* Account of Pamphlets &c. p. 17.

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our excellent Church, as to her *requiring Subscription*; and requiring it according to her *own* Sense of Holy Scripture. This Part of the Controversy has been judiciously cleared, and settled, by two very Ingenious Writers; Mr *Stebbing* in his *Rational Enquiry*, and Mr. *Rogers* in his *Review*. My Business is only to begin where They end, and to show that, as the Church requires Subscription to her *own* Interpretation of Scripture, so the Subscriber is bound, in Virtue of his Subscription, to *That*, and *That* only: And if He knowingly subscribes in any Sense *contrary* to, or *different* from the Sense of the *Imposers*; He prevaricates, and commits a *Fraud* in so doing. This is a Cause of some moment; It is the Cause of Plainness and Sincerity in Opposition to Wiles and Subtleties. It is in Defense, not so much of *revealed*, as of *Natural* Religion; not of the Fundamentals of *Faith*, but of the principles of *Moral* Honesty: And every *Heresy* in *Morality* is of more pernicious Consequence than *Hereses* in Points of *positive* Religion. The Security and Honour of our Church are deeply concern'd in This Question. As to its *Security*, every body sees what I mean: and as to the *Honour* or *Reputation* of our Church abroad; whenever we have been charged with *Socinianism*, or *Papery*, or any other *Monstrous* Doctrines; we had no Defense so ready at Hand, or so just and satisfactory as This; that our *Subscriptions* were sufficient to wipe off all *Slander*, and *Calumny*. The good of the *State*, as well as of the *Church*, is likewise concern'd in This Question: Because There can be no Security against Men's putting their own *private* Senses upon the *Publick* Laws, *Oaths*, *Injunctions*, &c. in contradiction to the Sense of the *Imposers*, if These Principles about *Church Subscription* should ever prevail amongst us. But of This, more will be said in the Sequel. I design'd only, at present, briefly to intimate the Importance

tance of the Cause I am inquiring into; to invite the Readers to the more careful Examination of it. And I shall enter into the *Merits* of it, as soon as I have laid down the Principles of the Men I am now concern'd with, in order to let us into the True *State* of the *Question*.

C H A P. II.

The general Principles, or Sentiments of the Modern Arians (some of them at least) concerning Subscription to our publick Forms.

THE Author of the *Remarks* observes, that it is an avowed Principle among Them, that These Articles (The 39. Articles) may lawfully and conscientiously be Subscribed in Any Sense in which They Themselves, by their own Interpretation, can reconcile Them to Scripture (i. e. What They call Scripture; or their own Sense of Scripture) without regard to the Meaning and Intention, either of the Persons who first compiled Them, or who now impose Them. He says farther, that This Latitude was expressly asserted in the Year 1712, by a Learned Doctor of Divinity, in a Book intitled, The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity; and was advanced on purpose to justify their Subscribing. It is very well that the Doctrine can be dated no higher then the Year 1712; as indeed it cannot; being intirely new: never heard of among Sober Casuists, at least, before That Time. Now, The principal Words of the Author of *Scripture Doctrine* (as They stand in the Introduction to the First Edition) are These. 'Tis plain that every Person may reasonably agree to such Forms (our Church's Forms, or of any other Protestant Church) whenever

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He can in any Sense at all reconcile Them with Scripture; i. e. his own Sense of Scripture. It is observable that These Words are *general*; and somewhat *ambiguous*. For the Doctor does not say, in any Sense whereof the Words are *capable*, and withal *consistent with Scripture*; but *consistent with Scripture* only: And if He speaks there of the Forms in *General*, as He seems to do, He might possibly mean, that any Man may agree to such Forms when He can *any way* reconcile Them: whether by giving *no assent* to Passages irreconcilable, or whether by substituting *something* else in their room: And This would amount to subscribing *so far as agreeable to Scripture*. I know, The Doctor has took pains to reconcile the particular Passages in the *Publick-Forms* to his own *Hypothesis*; from whence one might imagine that He takes every particular Expression to be *capable* of a Sense consistent with his Scheme. But I know also, and shall show it in due Time, that He has often given a *Sense* of which the Words He is there commenting upon, are really not *capable*: which is substituting *something else* in the room of what He finds in our *Forms*, to reconcile Them to his *Hypothesis*. And I do not remember that the Doctor has ever expressly said, that every single Expression of the *Publick-Forms* is *capable* of a Sense agreeable to what He calls Scripture. Wherefore I have thought that the Doctor's real meaning was to subscribe with this reservation viz. *so far as is agreeable to Scripture*; tho' He chose to word it something differently, and less offensively, by saying, in *That Sense wherein They are agreeable*. What confirms me in This Suspicion, is, that several of the Doctor's Arguments for subscribing, serve equally for *one*, or *other*; and will either justify Both those kinds of Reservation, or neither. However This

matter be, as to the Doctor Himself; it is certain that others of the *Party* have express'd Themselves clearly and distinctly on this Head; and have condemn'd the way of subscribing with the Reserve of, *so far as is agreeable to the Scripture*; resting their Cause intirely upon the other viz. *in such Sense wherein They are agreeable*.

The Anonymous Author of the *Essay on imposing and subscribing Articles*, after declaring his Judgment (so far judging right) that They are not Articles of *Peace* only, but of *Opinion*; proceeds to condemn the Notion of subscribing *so far as is agreeable to Scripture*; insisting upon it that the Articles are *capable* of a *Sense* in which They are *agreeable* to what He calls *Scripture*: And He pretends no more than This, that a Man may honestly subscribe *in any Sense of which the Words are capable**, and withal *agreeable to Scripture*.

We are told in Another Tract, containing an *Account of Pamphlets* relating to the *Trinitarian* Controversy, that Subscribing the Articles *so far as They are agreeable to Scripture*, is very different from subscribing the same *in any Sense agreeable to Scripture*: and that They defend only the *Latter*, having *explicitly* † *condemned the Former*. The Sum then of what is pretended, is This. It is first supposed that the Articles &c. are *capable* of a *Sense* agreeable to what They call *Scripture*: And then, and not till then, it is supposed They may be subscribed. Their Defense of Subscription then rests upon *two Suppositions*.

1. That every Expression, in our Publick-Forms, is *capable* of a *Sense* consistent with the *New-Scheme*.

2. That their being *capable* of such a *Sense*, is enough; without regard had to the more plain, obvious, and natural Signification of the *Words* Them-

* Pag. 41. † Pag. 20.

selves, or to the *Intention* of Those who first compiled the Forms, or who now impose Them.

If *either* of These *Suppositions* (much more if Both) proves false, or groundless; their whole Defense of *Arian Subscription* drops of Course. I shall show,

1. That the Sense of the Compilers and Imposers (where certainly known) must be *religiously* observed; even tho' the Words were *capable* of another Sense.

2. That, whatever has been pretended, There are several Expressions in the *Publick Forms*, which are really not *capable* of any Sense consistent with the *Arian-Hypothesis*, or *New-Scheme*.

CHAP. III.

That the Sense of the Compilers and Imposers when certainly known (as in the present Case it is) is to be religiously observed by every Subscriber, even tho' the Words were capable of Another Sense.

BY *Compilers*, I mean Those that *composed* the *Creeds*, *Articles*, or other Forms receiv'd by our Church. By *Imposers*, I understand the Governours in Church and State, for the Time being. The Sense of the *Compilers*, barely considered, is not always to be observed; but so far only as the *natural* and *proper* Signification of Words, or the *Intention* of the *Imposers*, binds it upon us. The Sense of the *Compilers* and *Imposers* may generally be presumed the same, (except in some very rare and particular Cases) and therefore I mention Both, one giving Light to the other. The Rules and Measures proper for *Understanding* what That Sense is, are,

and can be no other than the same which are proper for the Understanding of *Oaths, Laws, Covenants*, or any *Forms*, or *Writings* whatever: Namely, the usual Acceptation of Words; the Custom of Speech at the Time of their being written; the Scope and Intention of the Writers, discoverable from the Occasion, from the Controversies then on Foot, or from any other Circumstances affording Light into it. This is the True and only way to interpret rightly any *Forms, Books, or Writings* whatever.

The pretences to the contrary, shall be considered in their proper place: I shall now hasten to the Proof of my first position, and shall be very brief in it; there being little occasion for proving so clear a Point: what is most necessary, is to wipe off the Dust that has been thrown upon it; and That shall be done in due Time and Place.

1. I argue, first, from the Case of *Oaths*. It is a settled Rule with Casuists, that *Oaths* are always to be taken in the Sense of the *Imposers*: The same is the Case of solemn *Leagues*, or *Covenants*. Without This Principle, no Faith, Trust, or mutual Confidence could be kept up amongst Men. Now, *Subscription* is much of the same Nature with Those; and must be conceived to carry much of the same Obligation with it. It is a solemn and sacred *Covenant* with the *Church*, or *Government*; to be capable of such, or such Trusts upon certain Conditions: Which Conditions are an unfeigned Belief of Those Propositions, which come recommended in the *Public-Forms*. To change these *Propositions* for others, while we are plighting our Faith to *These* only (as is supposed in the very Acceptance of Trusts) is manifestly a Breach of Covenant, and Prevaricating with God and Man. It is pretending one Thing, and meaning Another; It is professing Agreement with

with the Church, and at the same Time, *disagreeing* with it : It is coming into Trusts, or Privileges upon quite *different Terms* from what the Church *intended* ; and is, as one expresses it, not *entring in by the Door of the Sheepfold*, but getting over it, as *Thieves and Robbers*.

2 To make it still plainer that such Subscription is *fraudulent* ; let it be considered what the Ends and Purposes *intended* by the Ruling Powers, in requiring Subscription, are. They are express'd in our publick *Laws*, and *Canons*, to this Effect ; That *Pastors* may be *sound in the Faith* ; That no Doctrines be publickly or privately taught but what the Church and State approve of ; that all *Diversity of Opinions*, in respect of Points determined, be *avoided* ; that one *uniform Scheme* of Religion, one *Harmonious Form* of Worship (consonant to Scripture and primitive Christianity) be constantly preserved among Clergy and People. These are the main ends design'd by Subscription. But if Subscribers may take the Liberty of affixing their *own* Sense to the Publick-Forms, in contradiction to the *known Sense* of the Imposers ; All these wise ends are liable to be miserably defeated and frustrated. *Pastors*, instead of being *sound in the Faith* (which is but one) may have as many different Faiths as They happen to have different Wits, or Inventions. Multiplicity of Doctrines, opposite to each other, may be publickly taught and propagated : And, instead of any *uniform Scheme* of Religion, or *Form of Worship*, There may happen to be as many different and dissonant Religions in the same Church, or Kingdom, as there are *Pastors*, or *Parishes*. These being the natural Consequences of That Latitude of Subscription now pleaded for, it is evident that such a Latitude is a contradiction to the very End and Design of

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of all Subscription; and is therefore *unrighteous*, and *full of Deceit*.

3. I shall mention but one Consideration more; and That is the great Scandal, and pernicious Influence of such a *Fraudulent* Practise. I cannot better express it than in the Words of the late pious and excellent Mr. *Nelson*.

“ I could heartily have now wish’d (*says He, in*
 “ *a Letter to Dr. Clarke*) that we of the Laity
 “ had no such Handle ever given us, as This your
 “ last Book hath afforded, as it is to be feared, but to
 “ too many who think Themselves able to over-
 “ turn any Foundations whatever, if such a Method
 “ as you there propose be allowable with respect
 “ to the most solemn Acts and Deeds of That Church
 “ and Community whereof we are Members, and
 “ to substitute what They please in their Room†.
He observes farther (p. 19.) That “ From a Me-
 “ thod of this Nature, we are threat’ned with the
 “ overturning of Foundations both sacred and civil.
 “ And (p. 21.) that if The Judges and Others
 “ Learned in the Law, shall follow the same Me-
 “ thod of interpreting the *Laws* of the *Land*, and
 “ accommodating the *Civil Oaths* and engagements
 “ as Dr. *Clarke* has taken in interpreting and accom-
 “ modating The Sense of the Church, in her most
 “ Authentick Forms and Declarations before God
 “ and Man, and of the venerable Fathers of the Ca-
 “ tholick Church; there are many of Opinion that
 “ every Thing might easily be leaped over, and
 “ that no Establishment could be so strong as to last
 “ long: And “ who knows whereabouts his Reli-
 “ gion, Liberty, or Property may be, if such a La-
 “ titude of interpretation be defensible as is avouch-

“ ed in Dr. *Clarke's* Third Part openly; and is there-
 “ fore suspected in his First, and Second? Thus
 far Mr. *Nelson*. And there is so much Strength of
 Reason, and plain good Sense shown in what He says,
 that all the little *Distinctions*, evasions, and Subtilties
 pleaded on the other side can never shake it. These
 and the like Considerations have ever deterr'd wise
 and good Men from such a Method. No Consci-
 entious *Protestant* would subscribe the Romish Cate-
 chism, or Pope *Pius's* Creed; no serious *Papist* would
 subscribe our *Articles*; No pious *Dissenter* would
 give his *Assent* and *Consent* to such Parts of our
 Publick-Forms as He does not heartily approve of,
 in the common received Sense. Thousands have
 died Martyrs to the maxims which I am now
 asserting; Whose great and only Misfortune it was
 not to have been acquainted with those *evasive Arts*,
 and *subtle Distinctions*, which, it seems, might have
 preserved Them. I come next to examine what
 Those pretences and evasions are: And that They
 may lose nothing in the recital, They shall appear
 in the very Words of their Authors; and to every
 particular *Plea* I shall return a particular *Answer*.

C H A P. IV.

*The several Pleas and Pretences for Sub-
 scribing, after the New Method, examin'd
 and confuted.*

P L E A I.

“ THE Protestant Churches require Men to com-
 “ ply with their *Forms* merely on Account of
 “ their being agreeable to Scripture; and consequent-
 “ ly

“ ly in *such Sense only* wherein They are agreeable to
 “ Scripture. Clarke's Introd. p. 20.

“ That This is not highly reasonable among *Pro-*
 “ *testants*, and particularly in the Church of *England* ;
 “ or that This hath been ever contradicted, or cen-
 “ sured by Any *Judgment* of the Church, I leave
 “ Him (Bp. *Potter*) to prove. Bp. of *Bangor*'s Post-
 “ Script, p. 258.

A N S W E R.

1. Before ever *Popery* was known, Subscription to *Creeds*, or other *Forms*, has been required: and always in the Sense of the *Imposers*.

2. It is allowed that no Man is by the Church requir'd to subscribe *against* his *Conscience*; or, what comes to the same, in a Sense which He *thinks* not agreeable to *Scripture*. If That be Any Man's Opinion with respect to the *Sense* of our Publick-Forms, He ought not to subscribe at all.

3. The Church indeed requires Men to comply with Her Forms, *merely on account of their being agreeable to Scripture*: And, for that very Reason, must require Subscription in Her *own* Sense; because That *only* Sense is (according to Her) *agreeable to Scripture*. It is a contradiction to suppose that any Church requiring Subscription to Her *own* *Explanations* (as every Church does) should at the same Time permit the *Subscriber* to run counter to Those *Explanations*. For, since She looks upon Her own *Explanations* as the only *True Sense* of *Scripture*, and requires subscription to the *True Sense* of *Scripture*; She can never be presumed to allow other *Explications* which are in Her Judgment) *not agreeable to Scripture*; it being Her Principle to admit nothing but what is
agreeable

agreeable to Scripture. Whoever therefore does violence to the *Publick-Forms*, must be supposed (by That Church whose Forms Those are) to do as much Violence to *Scripture* it self; and consequently, such a Church cannot admit of it. It is Therefore evident that This *Plea* overthrows it self.

4. That it is reasonable for any *Protestant* Church to require subscription in Her *own Sense*, is as certain as that it is reasonable to require subscription at all. For whatever Church requires subscription must require it in such Sense as That Church believes to be the *true Sense* of *Scripture*; and not in a Sense which That Church believes to be *false*. The Sense therefore of the *Imposers*, and none other; must be The Sense which is required of the Subscriber. The Reason of the Thing Speaks it; and there is no more occasion for any *Declaration* of the Church, in This Case, than there is for a *Declaration* of the *State* in the Case of *Civil Oaths*. For who knows not that Men ought to be *sincere*; and not to *subscribe*, or *swear* one Thing, and *mean* Another?

5. It is neither fair, nor just to require any express *Censure* or *Judgment* of the Ruling Powers against a Practice never begun till the Year 1712; and which is too absurd in it self to need any formal Prohibition. It was always presumed, and taken for granted, that the *Publick-Forms* should be understood as *intended* by the Church, and not *strain'd* or *wrested* to a foreign Sense. King *James* the 1st in his *Proclamation*, for the *Authorizing an Uniformity of the Book of Common-Prayer*, hath These Words; "Concerning
" the Service of God we were Nice or rather Jealous, that the *Publick-Form* thereof should be free
" not only from Blame, but from Suspicion; so as
" neither the Common Adversary should have Occasion to *wrest* ought therein contained, to other Sense
" than

“ *than the Church of England intendeth*; nor any
 “ *troublesome or ignorant Person of this Church*
 “ *be able to take the least occasion of cavil against it.*

King Charles the 1st in his *Declaration*, prefix'd to the Articles, *prohibits the least difference from the said Articles*, and expressly forbids the *affixing any new Sense to any Article*. And it was the *Resolution* of all the Judges of England, * that *Smith's Subscription to the 39 Articles with this addition (so far forth as the same were agreeable to the Word of God)* was not according to the Statute of 13. Eliz. And one of the Reasons given, is, because *The Act was made for avoiding of diversity of Opinions, &c. and by this Addition The Party might, by his own Private Opinion, take some of Them to be against the Word of God; and by this means Diversity of Opinions should not be avoided, (which was the Scope of the Statute)* and the very *Act it self made touching Subscription hereby of none effect*. Now This Reason, on which The *Resolution* of the Judges was chiefly founded, equally affects the *Subscription* here pleaded for; and is equally strong against it. Wherefore it must be allowed that such Subscription, has been sufficiently *censured and condemned* by our *Laws*: And that all *wresting or straining* of the Publick-Forms to any *new or foreign Sense, different from what the Church intended*, is not only against the very End and Design of all Laws made for the Establishing Consent and Uniformity of Doctrine and Worship, but has also been expressly prohibited by the Ruling Powers.

PLEA II.

“ *If Tradition, or Custom, if Carelessness or Mistake, either in the Compiler or Receiver, happen at*

* Coke Institut. 4. c. 74. p. 324.

“ Any

“ Any Time to put a Sense upon any Humane Forms,
 “ different from that of the Scripture, which Those
 “ very Forms were intended to explain, and which
 “ is at the same Time declared to be the only Rule
 “ of Truth; 'tis evident no Man can be bound
 “ to *understand* Those Forms in such Sense; nay on
 “ the Contrary, He is indispensably bound not to
 “ *understand*, or *receive* Them in such a Sense.

Clarke's, *Introduct.* p. 21.

ANSWER.

This *Plea* confounds two very distinct Things;
 the Rule for *Understanding*, and the Rule for *Re-*
ceiving any Forms. It should be proved that an *A-*
rian may not be obliged to *understand* the Publick-
 Forms in a Sense contrary to what He calls *Scripture*:
 (or, what comes to the same, contrary to his own
Hypothesis) But all that is really proved is This only;
 that He is not obliged to *receive* Them in That
 Sense, but obliged to the contrary; that is, to re-
 ject Them, and not subscribe at all. The Argument,
 reduced to a syllogistical Form, would stand thus.

No Man ought to *receive* any Humane-Forms in a
 Sense repugnant to what He thinks Scripture.

But the *obvious* and *intended* Sense of our Publick-
 Forms is a Sense repugnant to what some think Scrip-
 ture.

Therefore such Persons ought not to *receive* Them
 in their *obvious*, *intended* Sense: neither indeed so
 to *understand* Them.

Any young Logician will readily perceive that
 here is more in the *Conclusion* than there is in the
 Premises; and that so much of the *Conclusion* as is really
 just, is entirely besides the Question: containing no-
 thing but what no body doubts of; viz. that no Man
 ought to subscribe against his Conscience.

P L E A I I I.

“ The Sense in which any Humane-Forms appear
 “ to a *Man's self* to be consistent with Scripture, and
 “ not the presumed meaning of the *Compilers* (add
 “ or *Impoters*) is to be the Rule and Measure of
 “ his *understanding* Them. This is both evident in
 “ Reason (because otherwise every Human-Govern-
 “ ment makes a new Rule of Faith) and is more-
 “ over by all Protestants agreed upon without Con-
 “ troversy in Practice. *Clarke's Reply*, p. 34.

A N S W E R.

The Doctor appears to have been in confusion here, as much as in the Preceding: not distinguishing between the Rule for *Understanding* Humane-Forms, and the Rule for *Receiving*. We are first to consider what the true meaning and Intent of the Forms are: And This we are to judge of from the natural Force of the Words, and from the Scope, Drift, and Design of the *Compilers* or *Impoters*. After This, we are to consider, by the *Rule of Scripture*, whether we can *receive* Them or no. If, upon such Examination, it appears to us that the Forms, according to the Sense of the *Impoters*, are agreeable to Scripture; we may safely subscribe; if otherwise, we must not do it for the World: what can be plainer?

As to the Suggestion that, in This way, every *Humane-Government* makes a new Rule of Faith; it is mere Fancy and Fiction. *Publick Determinations*, (at least generally speaking) are more likely to keep close to the *Rule of Faith*, than *Private Conceits*. Scripture is still the same *Rule of Faith*, only under the prudent Guard of *Publick Explanations*, to obviate the wild

wild uncertainty of *Private Expositions*. This is not paying more regard to *Humane Forms*, than to *Scripture*; but more regard to some *Humane Explications* than to other *Humane Explications*; more regard to a select number of *wise Men*, than to *conceited Opiniators*: In a Word, more regard to the most prudent, and most effectual (tho' not *infallible*) method of preserving the Sacred Truths, than to Another which is so far from being *infallible* for the preserving of the true Faith, that it is rather the surest means to destroy it. All *Protestant Churches* have took into This approved way of securing, as far as possible, the *true Sense* of Scripture by *publick*, and *authorized Expositions*. And This is paying the tenderest and most religious regard to the *Rule of Faith*; there being no safer or better way than This is to preserve it. But enough in answer to a weak Suggestion; which, if it proves any thing, proves the *unlawfulness* of *imposing* any Forms; not the *lawfulness* of subscribing in a Sense different from That of the *Imposers*.

PLEA IV.

“ With respect to Civil Matters, — There is
 “ lodged in every Government, a Legislative Power
 “ — neither can there in this Case be any other
 “ Rule by which to interpret the Law, but only
 “ by discovering from the obvious signification of
 “ Words, what was in the whole, the real Sense
 “ and Intent of the Legislators. But now in Ec-
 “ clesiastical Matters — the Case is very different.
 “ The Church in Matters of Doctrine has no Legis-
 “ lative Power &c.

Clarke's Reply, p. 32.

ANSWER,

A N S W E R.

1. This is only Amusement. What has *Legislative Power* to do in This Question? If an *Equal*, if an *Inferior* proposes me any Articles to subscribe; I may indeed refuse Subscription (and so I may when proposed by *Superiors*) but if I submit to *Subscribe*, I must do it in the Sense of Him that *Articles*, or *Covenants* with me; and according to the *plain, usual, and literal* Sense of the Words.

Besides, what shall we think of *Oaths* imposed by an *Usurper*? May I *Swear* to Any Thing, only because He has no *Legislative Power* over me? Here will be a fair Way open'd for any prevarication in *State-Oaths*, as often as Any one questions the Legality of the Powers that impose them.

2. To answer a little more directly; Subscription is required by the *Legislative Powers*: And there is just the same reason for attending to the Sense of the *Imposers*, in the matter of *Subscription*, as in any *civil Oaths, Tests, Laws* or the like: And every Objection against the one, is equally strong against the other also. The *Legislative Powers* in a Christian State, are under the Law of *right Reason*, and also under the Law of *Christianity*. Now, what if the *civil Oaths, Laws, Tests &c.* be thought contrary either to the Dictates of *Reason*, or to the Law of *Christ*, which the *Lawgivers* pretend to follow, and to conform to as their Rule? Then, upon the Principles of the Subscribing *Arians*, Any Man may force and strain the *civil Oaths, Laws, Tests &c.* to his own *private* Sense, contrary to the Meaning of the *Ruling Powers*, in order to reconcile Them to what He thinks *Reason*, or *Scripture*; that is, to his own Principles, Fancies, or Concoits, whatever They be. The
Case

Case is parallel in all Circumstances affecting the present Question; and the *Plea* that is here used for the Justifying a *fraudulent* Subscription, with a very little Change, will serve as well to justify a *fraudulent* taking of the civil *Oaths*, or *Tests*; and so there will be an end of all Trust or mutual Confidence, so long as Words are capable of being wrested or tortured into more Senses than one.

P L E A V.

“ Every Man that (for the Sake of Peace and
 “ Order) *assents to*, or *makes use of*, any such Forms
 “ of Humane Appointment; is obliged to *reconcile*
 “ Them with what appears to Him to be the Doctrine
 “ of Scripture, and take care to *understand* Them in
 “ such a Sense only, as is *consistent* with That Do-
 “ ctrine : otherwise He parts with his Christiani-
 “ ty for the Sake of a Civil and Political Religion.
 Clarke’s Reply, p. 33.

A N S W E R.

1. The same *Plea* may serve for *Papists*, and Persons disaffected to the Government, whenever (for the Sake of *Peace* and *Order*) They may be disposed fraudulently to take the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and *Abjuration*. Those Oaths, indeed, in their *literal* and *intended* Sense, are directly repugnant to their Sense of Scripture. But They are to take care to *understand* Them in *such a Sense only* as is consistent with their Doctrines; otherwise, They part with *their Christianity* for the Sake of a *Civil and Political Religion*.

2. More directly I answer, secondly, that if any Humane Forms, in their *obvious*, and *intended* Sense, appear

appear not consistent with what Some call *Scripture*; such persons ought not, for the Sake of *Peace* and *Order*, neither yet for the Sake of a *Benefice* or *Dignity*, nor for any Consideration whatever, to assent to such Forms. Nay, They are indispensably bound to refuse *Assent*, or *Subscription* to such *Forms*; otherwise They part with their *Christianity* for the Sake of the *Mammon* of This World; or, at best, for the Sake of *Peace* and *Order*; which is doing *Evil that Good may come*; and is an abominable Practise in the Sight of God, and Man.

P L E A VI.

“ Bp. *Pearson* saith that whatever is delivered in
 “ the *Creed*, we therefore believe, because it is contain’d
 “ in the *Scriptures*; and consequently must So believe
 “ it as it is contain’d there: Whence all this *Exposi-*
 “ tion of the *Whole* is nothing else but an *Illustration*
 “ and *Proof* of every particular *Part* of the *Creed* by
 “ such *Scriptures* as deliver the same, according to the
 “ *True interpretation* of Them. *Exposition* on the
 “ *Creed*. p. 227.

“ And the whole *Church* of *England* has made the
 “ like Declaration, in the 6th, the 20th, and 21st
 “ of the 39 *Articles*, before cited; and in the
 “ *Eighth Article*, which declares that the *Creeeds* ought
 “ to be received and believed because (and conse-
 “ quently only in such *Sense* wherein) They may be
 “ proved by most certain *Warrants* of *Holy Scripture*.
Clarke’s *Introduct*.

A N S W E R.

I. What Bp. *Pearson* has there said, relates to the
 Article of Christ’s *Descent into Hell*; the *Sense* of
 which

which is left indefinite, and undetermin'd by our Church; and therefore This is not pertinent to the Point in Hand. To let us see how far that good and great Bishop was from countenancing any thing like what the Doctor pleads for, I may transcribe one paragraph from the preceding page, p. 226. *Wherefore being our Church hath not now imposed That Interpretation of St. Peter's Words, which before it intimated; being it hath not declared That as the only Place of Scripture to found the Descent into Hell upon; being it hath alleged no other Place to ground it, and delivered no other Explication to expound it; We may with the greater Liberty pass on to find out the true Meaning of this Article, and to give our particular Judgment in it.* Had the Bishop foreseen what ill use might possibly be made of his other Words; He could not have guarded more particularly against it, than He has here done. Wherefore it was very peculiar to cite Him in Favour of such a *Subscription*, or such a *Latitude*, as He would have utterly abhorred, and detested.

2. As to the Doctrine of the Church of England in her 6th, 8th, 20th, and 21st Articles, it is no more than This; that *nothing is to be received but what is agreeable to Scripture.* And for This very Reason, she requires Subscription in her own Sense, because she judges no other Sense to be *agreeable to Scripture.* If Any judge otherwise, let Them not *Subscribe.* It is but shallow Artifice of the Pleaders for a *fraudulent* Subscription, constantly to call their *Interpretations* of Scripture, *Scripture*; and from thence to infer that the Church requires, or permits Subscription in *their* Sense. The Church surely has as good a right to call her *Interpretations* by the Name of *Scripture*; and then Her requiring Subscription to *That only which is agreeable to Scripture,*

is requiring Subscription in her *own* Sense of Scripture, and none else. Let the *Arian* Sense of Scripture be *Scripture* to *Arians*: But then let them subscribe only to *Arian expositions*; which are nothing akin to Those of our *Church*.

P L E A VII.

“ When in the *Publick Forms* there be (as there
 “ generally are) expressions which at first sight, look
 “ different ways; it cannot be but Men must be al-
 “ lowed to interpret what is *Obscure*, by that which
 “ seems to Them more *plain* and *Scriptural*.

Clarke's Reply, p. 33.

A N S W E R.

What a Fanciful Representation is here of our *Publick-Forms*; as if They, either at *first Sight*, or at all, look'd towards *Arianism*; When the very strongest Words which the Wit of Man can devise to exclude it, occur every where in our *Publick-Forms*. And it is so far from being *obscure* whether the *Compilers* and *Imposers* intended to exclude it, and to profess the *Catholick Doctrine* up to the Highth, that it is Demonstration They did *intend* it. This *Plea* therefore has nothing to rest upon but a Misrepresentation of *Fact*.

If the Meaning be, that the Doctrines taught by our Church are *obscure*, that is, *Mysterious*: and therefore They may claim a Liberty of explaining them away, into what appears to Them more *plain* and *Scriptural*; I say, if That be the Meaning of the *Plea*, then it comes to This; that whenever Any Church imposes the Belief of *Mysteries*, a Subscriber may honestly substitute what He pleases instead of the *Mystery*; or may make no *Mystery* of it, by reducing

it (contrary to the *Intention* and *Meaning* of the *Imposers*) to something appearing to Himself more plain and *Scriptural*. Upon this Foot, it will be impossible for any Church ever to secure the Profession of any *Mysterious* Doctrine against secret Meanings and subtle Evasions: but Men may subscribe to as many *Mysteries* as They please, and still believe none of Them.

P L E A VIII.

“ In the Doctrine of the Trinity, I have no way
 “ certainly to inform my self, what is the Sense of
 “ the Church. The Words of the *first Article* are
 “ capable of at least *four* Senses; and Each of These
 “ Senses is defended by learned Divines of the
 “ Church — The *four* Senses I mean, are These.

“ 1. That which makes the Three Persons to be
 “ only *Three Modes* of one Mind; Which I call
 “ *Sabellianism*.

“ 2. That which makes the Three Persons to be
 “ something more than Three *Modes* of one Mind,
 “ and yet *not Three Minds*: i. e. Makes Them to
 “ be *media* between *entia* and *non-entia*, something
 “ and nothing; which I call *Non-Sense*.

“ 3. That which makes the Three Persons to be
 “ *Three equal Minds*: Which I call *Tritheism*.

“ 4. That which makes Them to be *unequal*
 “ *Minds*, one independent and existing of it self,
 “ the other two deriving their existence from the
 “ First: (*which The Author should have called A-*
 “ *rianism*.)

A N S W E R.

This Writer goes roundly to work; and gives us a Specimen both of his *Profound* Sense, and his *Modesty*. He first throws Dust upon the *Article*; and then complains that it is *dark* and *confused*. The *Article* is really capable of but *one Sense*; and That Sense none of the *Four*, as He has represented Them.

It is not *capable* of the *First* pretended *Sense*. There is not a Word of *Three Modes* either in the *Article*, or any where else in our *Publick-Forms*. The Notion is neither *express'd*, nor *implied* in the *Article*; and therefore cannot be the Sense of it: Nay the Notion is a Contradiction to the very Words of the *Article*. *Mode*, *Mode*, and *Mode* will never amount to *Substance*: But the *Article* plainly makes every *Person* to be *Substance*, as invested with *Power* and *Eternity*, and as being of *one Substance* with the other two *Persons*, and making there-with *one Living and True God*.

The *Second Sense*, when rightly understood, is the true Sense of the *Article*: but not as it lies under the ridiculous Representation which This Writer has made of it. The *Sense* in it is the *Article's*, the *Non-Sense* is his *own*. The *Article* says not a Word of a *Medium* between *something* and *nothing*: But that the *Three Persons*, are neither *Three Modes*, nor *Three Minds*, is indeed plain enough from the *Article*. Neither is there any *Non-Sense*, but a great Deal both of *Sense* and *Truth*, in saying, that every *Person* is *Substance*, and yet They are not *three Substances*; every *Person Mind*, and yet not *three Minds*; every *Person God*, and yet not *three Gods*. The *Union* is too close and intimate to admit of the *plural Expressions* of *Minds*, *Substances*, *Gods*; Which
can

can belong only to *separate* Persons : Three Persons so united as These are supposed to be, are *one Substance, one Mind, one Being, one God* ; and that in a very just and proper Sense.

As to the third and fourth Senses of *Three Minds* equal, and unequal, which would imply *Three Substances*, the Article excludes Them Both ; by making the Three Persons *one Substance, and one God*. Upon the whole, it appears that the *First Article* is not capable of more Senses than *one* : and yet if it were capable of *many* Senses, unless the *Arian* Sense were one of Those *many*, This Gentleman and his Brethren could not, honestly and fairly, subscribe.

P L E A IX.

“ Unless This Liberty be allowed, no body can
“ subscribe the Articles, Creeds, and Liturgy of
“ the *Church of England* at all. There are several
“ Things in these Forms which, if taken in the most
“ *obvious* Sense, contradict one another : And therefore
“ *some* of them must be understood in a Sense which
“ is not the *obvious* one. In the Doctrine of the
“ Trinity, it is plain from Dr. *Clarke's* Collection
“ Ch. 1. of the 3^d Part of his *Scripture Doctrine*, that
“ there are a great Number of Passages in the Liturgy
“ which in the *obvious* Sense make for his Opinion :
“ And therefore must by Those who are of a different
“ Opinion be understood in a Sense which is not the
“ *obvious* one. *Essay on Impos. p. 43.*

“ I am sure it is no more a putting of Violence
“ upon the Expressions cited in *Chapter the 2^d. of the*
“ *Third Part*, to make them consistent with Scripture,
“ and with the Expressions of the Liturgy cited in
“ *Chapter the 1st* ; than it is, on the contrary, a
“ putting of Violence upon the Scripture and upon the
“ *Expres-*

“ Expressions cited in *Chapter the 1st* to make Them
 “ consistent with the Expressions cited in *Chapter the*
 “ 2d. *Clarke’s* Introduct.

ANSWER.

We here meet with the utmost Confidence in affirming a matter of Fact, which every Man’s Eyes and common Sense may immediately discover to be *False*. The Sum of the *Plea* is, that there are many Expressions in our *Publick-Forms*, which in their *obvious* Sense contradict the *Received* Doctrine of the *Trinity*: And that Those called *Orthodox* must put as much *Violence* upon one kind of Expressions to reconcile them to their Scheme, as the *Arians* must put upon Others to reconcile Them to Theirs. The Expressions which are supposed in their *obvious* Sense to thwart the *received* Doctrine, are such wherein The Father is eminently styled *God*, and sometimes *only God*; or such as intimate a *Subordination* of Two Persons to One.

Now The Question will be, what Sense of Those Passages has the best right and Title to be called the *obvious* Sense. Is it not That Sense which has been in use and approved, in this *Mystery*, for 16 Hundred years? Is it not That Sense, which has been all along taught and inculcated before Baptism; That which all the Churches in *Christendom* receive and approve; That which the *Compilers* and *Imposers* of our Forms *certainly* intended; That which is so well known and has so long pass’d current, that no body almost can mistake it; That which the Words will not only *bear* (as may be shown from innumerable Instances in approved Authors) but which They really *require*, when considered together with what goes before or after Them, or with other Passages

in our Publick-Forms? Is not *That* to be look'd upon as the *obvious* Sense of Those Passages, rather than Another of *yesterday*, never before own'd by our Clergy or People, never suspected to be contain'd in our *Forms*, never *subscribed to*, till very lately; a *new, strange, unheard of* Sense (so far as concerns our *Publick-Forms*) and such as if admitted must make our *Forms* nothing else but a confused Heap and jumble of the most irreconcilable Contradictions? These Things considered, I must insist upon it, that the only *obvious* Sense of Those Passages is the *received* prevailing Sense of Them: it being *obvious* to every Man of common Understanding that *That, and That* only was ever *intended* by our Church, or received by our Clergy; or understood to be their *true Sense*, by *Papist* or *Protestant*, *Dissenter* or *Churchman*, *Native* or *Forreigner* from the Year 1552 to the Year 1712.

Our *Publick-Forms* have been well known to all the Churches abroad, to all the Learned in *Europe*. What Man ever suspected, till now, that They were tainted with *Arianism*, or but look'd *That Way*? There is no need of putting *Violence* upon any one Passage to reconcile it to the *received* Doctrine: All is easy and consistent throughout, form'd entirely upon *Catholick* Principles. Sometimes the Father is stiled *only God*, oft'ner *All Three*: sometimes Two of the Persons are introduc'd in a Subordination of *Order*, to the First; at other Times their perfect equality of *Nature* is as fully and clearly profess'd. No one that has been tolerably instructed, can be at a loss for the meaning of These Things. But as to the *Violence* used by the *Arian* Party, in torturing our Creeds and Liturgy; it is such, I believe, as was never before practis'd with any Words whatever. The old *Arians* would have detested such Practises:

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The 'Ομοῖσιον alone was such a Stumbling-Block to Them, that They could never get over it. And yet They were Artists in their way; and had carried the Mystery of *Equivocation*, and *Chicane*, far beyond Any Thing that had been known in the Church in the Ages before Them. As to the *Violence* which Those Gentlemen are forced to use with our Church's Forms, it will appear more fully in the sequel. At present, I shall content my self with Two Observations, which may help to give the Reader a just Idea of the difference between the *Orthodox* and Them, in This particular.

1. The first is, that what the *Orthodox* subscribe to, in respect of the Trinity, is none other but what all *Catholicks*, even the most zealous Opposers of the *Arians*, were ever ready to profess, and in the same Terms as we do. But (as I have already hinted) what our modern *Arians* subscribe, is what none of the Antient *Arians* would ever have admitted. They abhor'd the very Name, and Thing of *Consubstantiality*, *Coequality*, *Coeternity*, *One Godhead in 3 Persons*, or the like, which are all plainly laid down in our Publick-Forms. From hence it is manifest that the *Violence* We are charged with, would never have been thought Any by our Predecessors on the *Catholick* side: But the *Violence* which we Charge the *Arians* with, is such as *their* Predecessors would have allowed to be such.

2. Another Observation is, that what The *Orthodox* Clergy subscribe to, They are ready also to profess, from the Prefs, or the Pulpit, or in common Discourse, which are all of a piece with their *Subscription*; at least generally speaking. They scruple not in Sermons, in Writings, in Discourse, to give the Title of *God* eminently, or of *only God*, to the Father: nor to admit of such Expressions as imply a *Subor-*
dination

ordination of Order in the sacred Trinity. But The Arians, on the contrary, never use Any Expressions like to some which They subscribe to. They will never say from the *Press*, or from the *Pulpit*, or in common Conversation, that Father Son, and Holy Ghost are *One God*, that They are *Coequal*, *Coeternal*, &c. They allow of These Expressions as often as They *subscribe*; but never else. They understand what such Words mean in any other place but in our *Publick-Forms*; and They do not think They can *conscientiously* make use of them at other Times, however *conscientiously* They may subscribe to Them. Should any Man of Them, in a Treatise, or Sermon, throw out any such Shocking Assertions (*Shocking*, I mean, to Them) He would be look'd upon as a *Deserter* by the Party; and a *Betrayer* of the Cause which He had undertaken to defend. But if He *subscribes* to Them, and solemnly gives his *unfeigned Assent* and *Consent* thereto; This, it seems, and This only, is harmless, and inoffensive.

I shall confirm what I have said by a remarkable Instance. Dr. Clarke did but once declare, in a Paper laid before the Bishops, that *the Son of God was eternally begotten by the Eternal incomprehensible Power and Will of the Father*, (An Expression nothing near so strong for a *Coeternity* as Forty others which He has subscribed to) and his *Arian* Friends could not bear it*. It occasion'd a *real* and *sensible* Grief amongst Them. They look'd upon it as *giving up* the Cause, in a manner, and made broad Hints of his being led by *corrupt Nature*, into a very culpable Prevarication. See how easily Those Gentlemen can understand the Force of Words, Any where else but in our *Forms*; and how carefully They guard against the *use* of such Expressions, as They scruple not however to *sub-*

* See Apology for Dr. Clarke p. 49. &c.

scribe to. Let Any Man compare This Conduct of the *Arians* with That of the *Orthodox*; and He will plainly see, that the *Former* are Themselves *Conscious* of the *Violence* They put upon the *Church's* Forms; while the latter are not *Conscious* of any *Violence*, on their side, at all.

P L E A X.

“ By an Induction of particular Passages, There
 “ are 186 places wherein our *Publick-Forms* are clear-
 “ ly on his (Dr. Clarke's) Side. And 27 only
 “ which *seem* to differ from Him. Must not then
 “ the *smaller* Number be reconciled to the *greater*?
 “ Or, on the contrary, must the *lesser* Number,
 “ and the more *modern* Phrases be the Standard of
 “ Doctrine, and the Rule of interpreting the more
 “ *Antient* Phrases, and the *larger* Number?

Modest Plea. p. 120.

A N S W E R.

This is *pleasant*, and *pretty*. Of the 186 pretended Places, There is not one either *clearly*, or *at all* on the Doctor's side, as to the *Points of Difference* between Him and Us. They are Passages which may indeed be used by *Arians* (and so may They by *Catholicks*) consistently with their Principles. They are *capable* of different Views according to what They happen to be joyned with. But as They stand in our *Forms*, in company with Other Passages *express* and *full* for the *Catholick* Doctrine; They can reasonably bear no other but the *Catholick* meaning. I think it not material to inquire into the Truth and Justice of This *Writer's* Calculation; founded only upon Dr. Clarke's arbitrary disposition of his *Sections*, or *Paragraphs*:

graphs: Sometimes making one Sentence a *distinct Passage*, sometimes crowding many into One; and sometimes only *referring* to Passages omitted. Let the Number be as 186 to 27; Those 27 do not only *seem*, but *are* directly opposite to the Doctor's Principles, according to the *plain, literal, and natural Force of Words*, as well as the *known Sense of the Imposers*. The Question then justly stated lies Thus. Whether 186 Passages which might (if the *Compilers and Imposers* had not *intended* Them in a *Catholick Sense*) have been indifferently claim'd by either *Catholick* or *Arian*, should yield to 27 which are utterly repugnant to *Arianism*, or the 27 to Them. That is, whether Those that can bear but *One* of the Senses should yield to Those that may fairly admit of Either; or the contrary. Imagine 186 Men to be *indifferent*, or but nearly indifferent, in any Point of Dispute; and 27 *resolute* on one Side. Which is the way to reconcile Them, and to unite Them all in one Verdict? Is it to drag over the 27 by Force of Arms to what They are irreconcilably averse to? Or is it not rather to bring over the 186 to the 27, to whom They have little or no Aversion, and to whose Side They are no way disinclined? This latter, I think, is the proper and only method to promote Harmony and Concord in the Whole. The *Application* I Trust with the Ingenious; and here take my leave of This fanciful Reasoning of the *Modest Pleader*.

PLEA XI.

“ The Article in the *Apostle's Creed*, concerning
 “ Christ's *Descent into Hell*, is now universally under-
 “ stood in a Sense probably different from what the
 “ *Composers of the Creed* intended. *Clark's Reply*, p. 34.

ANSWER.

How Christ's *Descent into Hell*, was understood by the *Composers* of the Creed is *uncertain*: neither is it certain that it is *Universally* understood in any one Sense. However That be, one Thing is *Certain*, that our Church has left that *Article* at large, intending a *Latitude*; and indulging a *Liberty* to Subscribers to abound in their own Sense. This is not the Case of the Articles relating to the Trinity. Their Sense is *fix'd*, and bound upon the Conscience of every Subscriber, by the *plain, natural* Signification of the Words; and by the *known Intent* of the *Compilers* and *Imposers*. If it be ask'd from whence we are to learn what was the *Intent* of the *Imposers*, or how it may be *known*; I answer, first from plain Words; and next from History and Observation, in the like manner As the *Intent* and *Scope* of any Writer is to be known.

PLEA XII.

“The *Damnatory* Clauses in the *Athanasian* Creed are
 “are now by very few understood in That Sense
 “which, in all probability, the *Compiler* of it in
 “That very dark and Ignorant Age design'd to ex-
 “press. Clarke's Reply, p. 34.

ANSWER.

I. That the *Athanasian* Creed (so called) was compos'd in a *dark and ignorant Age*, is more than the Doctor *knows*: and therefore should not be so positively affirm'd by Him. The Creed however has no Signs or Tokens of *Darkness*, or *Ignorance*; but of great

great *Accuracy*, and *solid Judgment*: And is the best Exposition (for its compass) of the Doctrines of the *Trinity*, and *Incarnation*, that we shall any where meet with.

2. Another Thing which the Doctor affirms without *knowing*, is, that *few understand the Damnatory Clauses, in the Sense of the Compiler*. Let Any Man show what Sense it is most reasonable to understand Them in; and The same Reasons (if *good*) shall serve to show that That was the Sense of the *Compiler*. I know, many have strain'd the *Damnatory Clauses* to an unreasonable Rigour, on purpose to disparage the *Creed*: But They have not been able to prove that the *Compiler* so intended it.

3. The *Compiler's* Sense being doubtful, and the *Imposers* having left Those *Clauses* without any Exposition; The *Subscriber* is at Liberty to understand Them in such Sense as the Words will bear; and such as best answers the main Intent and Design of That *Creed*; and is most agreeable to Scripture and Reason. This Instance is nothing parallel to the Case of the Articles concerning the *Trinity*; whose Sense is *fix'd*, and *certain*, as before said. Fix, in like manner, the Sense of the *Damnatory Clauses*; and it shall soon be proved that every *Subscriber* ought to acquiesce in it.

P L E A XIII.

“ The *Procession* of the *Holy Ghost* set forth in the
 “ *Nicene*, and *Athanasian* Creeds in One Sense, is
 “ by Mr. (now Dr.) *Bennet* in his explication of
 “ his own Sense, concerning That Point, shown to
 “ be now understood by many (without any suspi-
 “ cion of insincerity) in a different Sense.

Clarke's Reply, p. 34.

ANSWER,

A N S W E R.

1. This is only *Argumentum ad Hominem* (to make the most of it) and therefore is not sufficient.

2. The Argument comes not up to the Point in Hand. Dr. Bennet was of opinion that our Church had determined nothing in This matter : otherwise He would not presume to interpret the *Procession* in own Way. His Words are. *If our Church had any where determined this matter, and declared in what Sense She understood the Procession in the Athanasian Creed; the Case would be altered**. And again. *Our Church never once adds the Epithet eternal to the Word Procession; nor has She any one Passage, that I know of, which may not be as well understood of the temporal, as of the eternal Procession, either in her Liturgy, her Articles, or her Homilies †*. I am not of Dr. Bennet's Mind, in This particular; believing that the Church has determin'd the Meaning of the *Procession* in Those Creeds; or rather that the Meaning is so plain, all things consider'd, as not to need any farther determining. However, it appears to be Dr. Bennet's Principle, relating to *Subscription*, that where the Church's Sense may be known, That Sense must be received; and that there is, in such a Case, no Latitude or Liberty left to the *Subscriber*. Upon This Principle, He both does, and must condemn *Arian-Subscription*, since both the plain Meaning of Words, and the Intent of Compilers and Imposers exclude *Arianism*. And it is well known with what Zeal and Earnestness Dr. Bennet remonstrates * against That *Collusion* which He takes Dr. Clarke and his Partizans to be guilty of, in the matter of *Subscription*.

* p. 292. † p. 293. * Bennet on the Trinity p. 265.

P L E A XIV.

“ The Doctrines of *Predestination* and *Original Sin*,
 “ are at this Day, by all eminent Divines (after the Ex-
 “ ample of Arch-Bishop *Land*, and of the learned
 “ Bishop *Bull*) understood in a Sense which there is
 “ no appearance the *Composers* of the 39 Articles
 “ meant to teach; and which there is all appear-
 “ ance the *Composers* of the *Homilies* intended should
 “ not be taught. *Clarke's Reply* p. 34.

“ I cannot condemn Arch-Bishop *Land*, Bishop
 “ *Bull*, and others, who departed manifestly from
 “ the received *Sense*, not of one but of several Arti-
 “ cles; nor That *Declaration* of K. *James I.* (read
 “ *Charles I.*) by which He openly patroniz'd the
 “ Subscribing the same Articles in *several*, not only
 “ different but *contradictory* Senses: and in effect de-
 “ clar'd it for the *Honour* of the *Articles* that This
 “ should be so; and that all should acquiesce in it
 “ without mutual Reproaches. *Lord Bishop of Ban-*
gor. Post-Script. p. 259.

A N S W E R.

1. It hath often been pretended by the *Calvinists*
 that the *Compilers* and *Imposers* of the *Articles* &c.
 intended a Sense different (with Respect to *Predesti-*
nation and *Original Sin*) from That which now ge-
 nerally prevails. But This Pretence has been often,
 and abundantly confuted by great Men; and parti-
 cularly by the learned Bishop *Bull*, in his *Apology* a-
 gainst Dr. *Tully*: where He has unanswerably vindi-
 cated the present Doctrines from the *Articles*, *Liturgy*,
Catechism, and *Homilies* of the Church of England.

2. A Distinction should be made between such
 Articles

Articles as, being formed in *general* Terms, leave a Latitude for private Opinions, and such as being otherwise Formed leave no such Latitude. It is ridiculous to pretend that, because *some* Articles are *general* or *indefinite*, and may admit of different Explications, therefore *all* may. Allowing that either *Calvinist* or *Arminian* may subscribe to the Articles (the Articles being *general*, and the main Points in dispute left undetermined) would it not be weak to argue from thence, that Both *Papists* and *Protestants* may likewise subscribe to the Articles of the Church of *England*? now, it is no less absurd to pretend that Both *Catholicks* and *Arians* may subscribe to our *Forms*; Some Articles being as *full* and *strong* Tests against *Arianism*, as others are against *Popery*.

3. It is not *fairly*, because not *truly*, suggested, that when Men of different Sentiments, as to *particular* Explications, subscribe to the same *general* Words, that they subscribe in *contradictory*, or even in *different* Senses. Both subscribe to the same *general* Proposition, and Both in the *same* Sense; only They differ in the *Particulars*, relating to it: Which is not *differing* (at least, it need not be) about the *Sense* of the *Article*, but about *particulars* not contain'd in the *Article*. For instance: let Two Persons assent to a *general* Proposition, *This Figure is a Triangle*; one believing the *Triangle* to be *equilateral*, the other believing its *Sides* to be *unequal*: They are directly opposite in their Sentiments as to what kind of *Triangle* it is: but in the *general* Proposition, that *The Figure is a Triangle*, Both agree, and in the *same* Sense.

In like manner, imagine the Article of *Predestination* (and the same may be said of any other in like Circumstances) to be left in *general* Terms. Both sides may *Subscribe* to the same *general* Proposition, and Both in the *same* Sense: which Sense reaches not to
the

the *particulars* in dispute. And if one believes Predestination to be *absolute* and the other *conditionate*; This is not (on the present supposition) differing about the *Sense* of the *Article*, but in their respective *Additions* to it.

4. It is very uncautiously and unaccurately said, that King Charles I. patronized the Subscribing the same *Articles* either in *contradictory*, or *different* *Senses*. His Order is, that every Subscriber *submit* to the *Article* in the *plain and full Meaning* thereof, in the *Literal and Grammatical Sense*. What? is the *plain and full Meaning* more than *One Meaning*? or is the *One plain and full Meaning* *Two contradictory* *Meanings*? could it be for the *Honour* of the *Article* (or of the King) to say This? No: but The Royal Declaration, by *plain and full Meaning*, understands the *general* *Meaning*, which is but *one*; and to which all might reasonably *Subscribe*. And He forbids any one's *putting his own Sense*, or *comment to be the Meaning of the Article*, or to *affix any new Sense* to it: That is, He forbids the changing a *general* *Proposition* into a *particular*; He stands up for the *general Proposition*, that is, for the *Article* it self; and prohibits *particular* *Meanings*, as not belonging to the *Article*; nor being properly *Explications* of it, but *Additions* to it. This is the plain Import of the *Royal Declaration*: And it is both wise and just; free from any of Those strange *Consequences*, or *Inferences* which some would draw from it.

5. I must farther remark, that the present Instance has no relation to the Point in Hand. The *Propositions* concerning the H. Trinity, contained in our *Publick-Forms*, are not *general* or *indefinite*, but *special* and *determinate*, in the very Points of Difference between *Catholicks* and *Arians*; (Consubstantiality, Coequality,

quality, Coeternity &c.) and That in as clear, and strong Words as Any can be devised. This is the Reason why the *Subscriber* has no Latitude left in This Case; and why an *Arian* can claim no Benefit from any *Latitude* allowable in other Articles where Circumstances are plainly different. And it must be thought a very peculiar way of reasoning to argue that, because a Man may take a Liberty where The Church and State have *allowed* it, therefore He may take the same Liberty where They have *not allowed* it: which is all that This *Plea* amounts to.

I cannot but observe from the Disputes, and Clamours that have been raised about the 17th Article of our Church, what a tender Regard has all a long been paid to the Point of the *Subscription*; and how jealous Men have been of any the least *appearance*, or *umbrage* of *Prevarication*, in so serious and Sacred a Thing. What then must be said of Those who plead for a *plain, open* Prevarication in a Case which can admit of no dispute with any Considering Man; and has hardly so much as a *Colour* left for it?

P L E A XV.

“ That Article in the *Nicene Creed* (of *one Substance with the Father*) is now (thro’ the Ambiguity of the Latin and English Translation) by most Men taken much otherwise than the Council intended it. For the greater Part of Modern Christians (if we may judge by the Writings of eminent Divines) understand it (as if it had been *τὸ αὐτοῦ ὅσιος*) to signify of *one individual Substance with the Father*, whereas all learned Men know that the Greek Word (*ὁμοῦσιος*) never had any such Signification, and that the Council meant no such Thing. *Clarke’s Reply*, p. 35.

ANSWER

A N S W E R.

Here is little more in This *Plea* than a Cavil upon the *double* Meaning of the Word *Individual*; Which has been sufficiently exposed in another Place. It has also been shown that the Doctrine of the *Nicene Council* is rightly enough understood by *Modern Christians*; and that while the Doctor so magisterially censures the whole Christian World, in a manner, yet no one ever understood this matter less, or talk'd more crudely of it than the Doctor Himself hath done, in This very page of his *Reply*. See my *Defense* p. 463. and *Reply to Doctor Whibby* p. 7. &c.

P L E A XVI.

“ It becomes a sincere Man (especially if He
“ varies from Notions commonly received) to de-
“ clare plainly in what Sense He understands any
“ Words of Humane Institution; that his *Inferiors*
“ and *Equals* may not be imposed upon by Him,
“ and that his *Superiors* may judge of such Decla-
“ ration. *Clarke's Reply.* p. 33.

“ Dr. *Clarke* of all Men could least be charged
“ with *Collusion*, because He has *Declared publicly* his
“ Opinions in This matter. *Modest Plea* p. 121.

A N S W E R.

I have reserved This *Plea* to the last, as being of a very different kind from the rest, and withal carrying a more plausible Show of Frankness and Sincerity in it. Nevertheless, This, tho' it has an Appearance of Fairness, will by no means serve the purpose for which it is brought.

Suppose any disaffected Persons in This Kingdom should invent some strange, forced, unheard of Interpretation of the *Civil Oaths*, to *elude* and *frustrate* the Intent of Them; and *declare* in Print, that They Themselves take the *Oaths* in this *New Sense*, advising their Brethren to do the same; would such *Declaration* be sufficient to save their *Honesty*, or to make Them *righteous* in the sight of *God*, or *Man*? would They not be rather thought the more notoriously wicked, as not only venturing upon *Perjury* Themselves, but instructing and seducing others into the same *Crime*?

Their giving notice of their *prevarication* would not be acquitting Themselves of the guilt, but *proclaiming* it; and in some respects, *increasing* it: as it would not only be doing an *ill Thing*, but, what is worse, boasting of it, and teaching others to do the like. One dishonest Act, or more, are not so dangerous, or pernicious, as the laying down principles, and contriving *subtilties* and artificial *Evasions*, whereby to undermine the very Foundations of moral *Honesty*.

I am not sensible that There is difference enough between This and the other Case, to make one *innocent*, and the other highly *criminal*. Nothing can be pleaded for it but the *presumed Consent* of the *Superiors*, after *Declaration* made. But that no such *presumed Consent* can have any place in the matter of *Subscription*, may appear from the Reasons following.

1. Because *Superiors* may often connive at, or tolerate *Offences*: which are never the less *Offences* for such *Connivence*.

2. Because so long as our *Superiors* continue the same *Forms*, which clearly express such a Sense, They must be presumed to *intend* the same *Sense*, till They *Declare* otherwise. And their permitting the same *Forms* to stand is a much surer Argument of
their

their still *intending* the same Thing, than their suffering an Offender to escape, with impunity, can be of the contrary.

3. The Expressions of our *Articles, Liturgies, Creeds, and Laws*, are all so *plain* and *full* for the *received Doctrine* of the *Trinity*, and against the *New-Scheme*; that a Man must have a very mean Opinion either of the *Understanding*, or *Integrity* of his *Superiors*, to suppose that They can ever *allow* Him to trifle at such a rate in so serious a matter as *Subscription*. And it must be observed that our *Superiors* speak by the *Publick-Forms*, as much as the *Legislature* speaks by the *Publick Laws*; and no Sense can be *their* Sense but the *plain, usual, literal* meaning of Those *Publick-Forms*; till some as *Publick*, and as *Authentick* Declaration alters the Case.

If The *Subscription* contended for, be in it self *fraudulent*, as elusive of the *Law*, a Man's declaring, or giving notice of it, does not alter it's Nature, or make it *legal*. Suppose a Man should *declare* that He subscribes only *so far as is agreeable to Scripture*; (a Method disallowed by our *Laws*, according to the unanimous Resolution of all the *Judges*, as before observ'd:) such *Declaration* would never alter the Nature of the *Subscription*; but it would be as much against *Law* as ever, notwithstanding: and for That very reason it would be *unrighteous* and *dishonest*. But, I have also observed that subscribing in any Sense contrary to the *plain* Force of Words, and *known meaning* of the *Imposers*, is equally *illegal* with the other: and therefore neither can This be justified any more than the other. And since whatever is *illegal* is of course condemn'd by our *Superiors*, who speak by the *Publick-Laws*; it is evident that our *Superiors* condemn This kind of Subscription: and consequently there is no pretence left for a *presumed consent*

sent, unless our *Superiors* can be presumed both to *allow* and *condemn* the very same Thing, at the same Time.

4. I must add that Our *Superiors* have, from Time to Time (as there has been occasion) sufficiently testified their disallowance of any Attempts tending to undermine the *Catholick*, *received* Doctrine of the ever Blessed Trinity. His present Majesty's *Directions*, at This very juncture, are yet Fresh in our Minds; where (to the general joy and satisfaction of the Kingdom) He has Signified his just Resentments against Those *impious Tenets and Doctrines* which have been of late advanced and maintained with much Boldness and Openness, contrary to the Great and Fundamental Truths of the Christian Religion, and particularly to the Doctrine of the Holy and ever Blessed TRINITY. And his Royal Command is, that no Preacher presume to deliver any other Doctrine——concerning the Blessed TRINITY, than what is contained in the Holy Scriptures, and is agreeable to the Three Creeds, and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. Now the 8th Article of our Church expressly affirms that the Three Creeds may be proved by most certain Warrants of Holy Scripture. Whosoever therefore gives it out for Scripture-Doctrine, that The One God always signifies the Father; or that More Persons than One cannot be, or are not one God; or that God with any high Epithet always signifies the Father; or that the Son, or Holy Ghost is not God, Lord, Almighty, eternal, uncreated, and incomprehensible as much as the Father; I say, whoever pretends Scripture for These, or the like Positions (Positions plainly repugnant to the *Athanasian* Creed, which Creed may be proved from Scripture, according to Article the 8th) does at the same Time act in opposition to his *Superiors*, who have enjoined the observance of the Creeds and Articles. If it be said that such general

neral Orders, or Directions of Superiors reach not to This particular Case, as not containing any formal prohibition of Those newly-devised Senses put upon the Creeds and Articles; I answer that there is no more occasion for a formal Prohibition against perverting The plain Sense of the Creeds, or Articles, than there is for the like prohibition against perverting the Sense of the Civil-Oaths. All that have Common Understanding are supposed to know, that directing us to adhere to the Creeds and Articles, is directing us to adhere to their True-Sense, That being always implied. To pervert their true and certain Sense, is not adhering to our Church Forms, but contradicting Them: which, tho' it be done in an insidious way, and under the false Name of explaining Them; yet, in reality, means the same Thing as the most direct and formal Opposition to Them. And however the Disguise may be serviceable in the Eyes of Men, yet Conscience is not a Thing to be played with in That manner; neither will such vain pretences avail any Thing in the sight of God. Subscribing in This Method is really nothing else but eluding the whole Design of the Laws, and imposing upon the Ruling Powers: But it must be doubly rude, and absurd, at the same time to presume, that any Man can have their Consent for it. So much for This.

I have now run thro' all the Pleas, Pretences, or Excuses (Arguments I will not call Them) that I could any where meet with for the new Method of Subscribing. The Reader is not to wonder at the Number of Them, which is an Argument only of a bad Cause. Had there been any good Reason whereon to found it, there had been no need of running out into such multiplicity. But when Men have once left the plain and True way, to follow their own wanderings, Invention is fruitful; and it is very easy al-
ways

ways to have a great deal to say, after a Man is gone beyond the Rule of *speaking to the purpose*. I believe, I may now venture to Affirm that the Cause which Those Gentlemen have taken in hand, is one of the weakest that was ever undertaken by Wise Men. False Facts, groundless Surmises, and inconclusive Reasonings are all That it has to subsist upon. And yet I have hitherto allowed them, for Argument sake, one *Supposition*; namely, that the Expressions in our Forms are *capable* of a Sense consistent with their Principles: And I have shown, notwithstanding, that their Subscription is *fraudulent*; because repugnant to the more *plain* and *obvious* Sense of the Words, and the *known* Intention of the *Imposers*. But I must now examine The Truth of That *Supposition* which has been thus far allowed Them: And if That also proves weak and groundless; there will then be nothing of colour or pretence left for That Subscription; but The very Men Themselves who either use it, or plead for it, must be *self-condemn'd*. I shall therefore next Examine how that Case stands; not that I need put the Issue of the Cause upon it (For it is a clear Point that the Subscription pleaded for, is *unjustifiable*, tho' I allowed Them the present Supposition) but *ex abundanti*, and to show how miserably weak and destitute of all Support, the Opposite Perswasion is, I may inquire whether even This their last Refuge may not be taken from Them.

C H A P. V.

That several Expressions in our Publick-Forms, are really not capable of a Sense consistent with the Arian Hypothesis, or New Scheme.

IT must be own'd that Words are *arbitrary* Signs of Things; and so, in some Sense, it may be said that the Word *White* is *capable* of signifying *Black*; and the Word *Light* might signify *Darkness*, if the Custom of Speech had not otherwise determin'd. I suppose, Those Gentlemen will not extend their Notion, of Words being *capable* of their Sense, Thus far. They must have Regard to *Custom* of Speech, to *use* of Language, to common Rules of Grammar and *Criticism*, in determining whether Words be *capable* of such a Sense or no. And whatever *Forms* are *capable* of That Sense which is contended for, must be conceived capable of being *Paraphrased* into That same Sense, by putting other equivalent Words into their Place. By These Rules and Measures I shall proceed in the Inquiry, whether the Expressions of our *Publick-Forms* are *capable* of an *Arian* Sense or no. Dr. *Clarke* has reduced the Number of Those which we chiefly insist on, to 27. I shall single out some of Them, following the Order wherein They lie, in the first *Edition* of *Scripture-Doctrine*, together with Dr. *Clarke's* Interpretation of them. I shall begin with the *Athanasian Creed*.

Whosoever will be saved; before all Things it is necessary that He hold the Catholick Faith.

Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt He shall perish everlastingly.

50 *The CASE of ARIAN*

And the Catholick Faith is This &c.

He therefore that will be Saved must thus think of the Trinity.

This is the Catholick Faith ; which, except a Man believe Faithfully, He cannot be saved.

These are what They call *Damnatory* Clauses : and it ought to be matter of serious Inquiry, in *what Sense* the Gentlemen of the *Arian* Perswasion can subscribe Them, without Subscribing their own *Damnation*. The very lowest Sense and import of Those *Damnatory* Clauses has ever been conceived to intend Thus much, that the *main Doctrine* of the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, The Doctrine of Worshipping *one God in three Persons*, and *Three Persons in one God* ; and the Doctrine of *Perfect God* and *Perfect Man*, united in one *God-Man*, are necessarily to be *believed* (or however *not disbelieved*) by all Persons of Years and Discretion, (who have had the Opportunity of being duly instructed) under Peril of eternal Damnation. As the Author of the Creed could not intend less than This : So neither can the Words Themselves import less. And yet there is just Reason to question whether the Advocates for the *new Scheme* think it necessary to *worship* God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost at all : It being a principle much contended for amongst Them, to *direct their Prayers uniformly to God the Father* : † meaning, I suppose, to *Him*, and to *Him only* : And it is certain that They neither believe *Three Persons* to be *one God* ; nor *Perfect God* (in the Sense of the Creed) to be united personally with *Perfect Man* to make one *God-Man*. Dr. *Clarke*, in his Comments, takes a great Deal of Pains to prove that *particular Explications* of all or any Part of the Doctrine of the Trinity cannot be *necessary* to Salvation. This proceeding of his would be right,

† See Modest Plea. p. 177. Brief Answ. to Dr. W. p. 64.

if He had been teaching his Followers to Subscribe with this Reserve, viz. *So far as is agreeable to what They think Scripture* : But since They are to Subscribe in *some Sense* whereof the Words are *capable*, as well as agreeably to Scripture; His Pains would have been better employed in showing how the *Damnatory* Clauses can be *capable* of a lower Sense than That which has been given.

We Worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. Here it is to be noted, that Dr. Clarke and his Adherents always by *One God*, understand God the Father only: and will never allow *Two Persons* in *One God*, tho' the Words of the Creed plainly include *Three*. Let us see then how These Words must be paraphrased, to make them consistent with their Principles. It is Thus:

“ We Worship One God (The Father) in Father
 “ Son and Holy Ghost: And we worship Father,
 “ Son, and Holy-Ghost, in One God the Father.
 “ That is, by referring all the Worship to the Father
 “ ultimately, as to the One Supreme Head. Let
 us consider what can be made of This Construction.
 It may be turn'd two Ways: either thus, *we worship*
One Person in Three Persons, and Three Persons in One
Person, (which is flat enough, and scarce Sense) or
 else thus, *We worship One God, the Father, principally,*
Worshipping Three Persons; and we worship Three Per-
sons, worshipping One God, the Father, principally. This
 indeed is Sense; but such as no one ever did, or
 ever would express in the Words of the Creed. It
 is not said, *Unum Deum Patrem praeipue venerantes,*
Trinitatem veneremur; & Trinitatem venerantes Unum
Patrem praeipue veneremur: But it is, *Unum Deum in*
Trinitate, & Trinitatem in Unitate veneremur. *ἐν*
Θεῷ ἐν Τριάδι καὶ Τριάδι ἐν μονάδι σέβωμεν.
 G 2 Plainly

plainly signifying, that The One God to be worshipped is The Trinity, and the Trinity to be worshipped is the One God: We may proceed to what follows.

Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, Another of the Son, and Another of the Holy-Ghost, But the Godhead of the Father of the Son and of the Holy-Ghost is all one &c. Here the meaning of the Words is very plain, that the *Persons* must not be *confounded* because Father, Son and Holy-Ghost are *distinct* Persons: Nor the *Substance* of the Three Persons be *divided*, because the *Godhead* of the Three is *all one*. To paraphrase the Words, upon the Doctor's Principles, They must run Thus.

“ *Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing The*
 “ *Father's Substance:* for the Three Persons are di-
 “ *stinct, but the Divinity of the Son and Holy-*
 “ *Ghost is no other than what is communicated*
 “ *from the Father. By This Paraphrase, the whole*
 Force of the Sentence is broken and confused. Understanding *Substance* of the Three Persons, the whole is well connected: for here is a Reason given why *their Substance* is not *divided*: viz. Because their *Godhead* is *One*. But what Sense or Connexion is there in saying that the *Father's Substance* is not divided; for, or because the *Divinity* of the Son &c. is no other than what is communicated from Him? No one would ever have express'd the Doctor's Sense, in those words of the Creed, or in that manner. Besides, the Words *Godhead all one* (*una divinitas, μία θεότης*) applied here to three Persons, are of *known, certain* Signification; denoting that the *Substance* of the Three is *One*, and that all are *one God*. So that if either the *Coherence* of the Sentence, or the *grammatical* Sense of Words, or their *constant and customary*

use in Church-Writers, be of any weight; The Passage now before us is not *capable* of That Sense which The Doctor would wrest it to; but must be construed in Another: which other is likewise confirm'd by the Words following; *The Glory Equal, The Majesty Coeternal.*

As to *Glory Equal*, The Doctor takes care to tell us, it must not be understood in the same Sense as *Coordinate Beings* are *equal* to one another. Well, That we know: But what Sense must the *Subscriber* understand it in? The Doctor says, in *such a Sense as He who derives his Essence, or Being from Another, can be equal* &c. Well, but what if the *Subscriber*, according to his *Arian* Sense of *deriving Being*, &c. thinks that the *Glory* of the second and third Persons can be in *no Sense* equal to That of the First; any more than the *Glory* of a *Creature* can be *equal* to the *Glory* of the *Creator*; how then can He subscribe to These Words, which are express for *Equality* of *Glory*, in some Sense or other? The Doctor's last Shift is, that it may be understood in such a Sense as Christ is said to be ἴσος Θεῷ (or ἴσα Θεῷ) as *God*, or *equal with God*. But the Doctor's Construction of ἴσα Θεῷ (*Phil. 2. 6.*) is no more than to be *honoured as Lord of all Things*, that is with Honour *equal*, or *suitable* to such a *God*, or *Lord*, so exalted; not with Honour *equal* to that which belongs to *God the Father*. But The *Creed* plainly makes the *Glory* of each Person equal to the *Glory* of any other Person: Wherefore the Words are not *capable* of such a Sense as the Doctor has put upon ἴσα Θεῷ , but the *Subscriber* is left to seek out for some other; or else to subscribe the Words in *no Sense* at all. The next Words of the *Creed* are

Majesty Coeternal. The Word *Coeternal* is of a
fix'd

fix'd and *known* Sense in Ecclesiastical Writers: never used to signify any thing less than *absolute* Eternity, without beginning, and without end. How contradictory This Sense is to the Principles of the Party, may be seen from the Author of the *Apology* for Dr. Clarke who says thus: * *Tho' the Generation of the Son, and Procession of the Holy-Ghost may, in a Sense, be said to be Eternal, as They were πρὸ πάντων and πρὸ αἰώνων*, yet what is This to the absolute Eternity of a Self-existent Being? We See what the *Apologist* thought of the great, the infinite disparity between the *Eternity* of the Father, and the *Eternity* of either of the other Two Persons: Nor did the Doctor in his Answer to Him disapprove of his Sentiments; but rather, (*tacitely* at least) acquiesc'd in Them. How then can These Gentlemen subscribe to the *Coeternity* of the Three Persons? The Doctor in his Comments, admits that the *Second* and *Third* Persons have *always* been with the *First*, which He explains by *before All Ages*, and *before Time*. If This comes up to a *Coeternity*, it is well: if not, He does but deceive Himself and his Followers: for *Coeternal* can bear but one Sense; and admit of no degrees, no difference in point of *Duration*.

The Reader should here observe the artful Method of explaining away the Sense of a *Creed*, or of any other Writing: Not for the sake of learning it (For it is not worth it) but to be arm'd against it, and to prevent being imposed upon by it. When a Word occurs, of a *fix'd* Sense, and which is not liked; The way is first to look out for Another Word that is *ambiguous*, which *may* bear the *same* Sense, but *may* also bear another. Draw but a Reader thus far to let slip the first Word, and to take this other instead

of it, and Then the Work is half done. Having a Word with *two Senses*, drop by degrees the Sense you have no mind to, and take the other, still substituting other Words which may come nearer and nearer to the Sense you aim at; till at length, by several removes, you get quite off from the Sense of the Word you began with.

Thus in the present Instance; From *Coeternal*, a Word of *fix'd* Sense, and rather too *high* for the *Arian* Hypothesis, The learned Doctor puts *always with the Father*; which might indeed signify the same Thing, but is however *capable* of a *lower* Sense: And to bring the Sense gradually down, the Doctor next substitutes the Phrase *Before all Ages*, which again is *equivocal*, and does not sound quite so high as the former; Then, to lower the Sense still farther, He has another Phrase, viz. *before Time*: And *Time*, in a *restrain'd* Sense, may be said to have *commenced* with the *World*. So now He is got low enough, and The Reader may be supposed, by these several Steps, to have lost the Sight of *Coeternal*. But to pass on.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy-Ghost. The Doctor's Interpretation of it is; "*such* in all Senses wherein He that derives his Essence " or Being from Another, can be *such* as is He " from whom He derives it. Here again He leaves his *Subscriber* in the dark. For what if He had said *such* in all Senses wherein a *Creature* can be *such* as his *Creator*, which I am afraid is the true meaning of most of his Disciples? This would come to the same as saying *such* in *no Sense*: so that by This limitation, He takes away the plain Force of the Words; and teaches his Followers to subscribe, not in *such Sense as the Words are capable of*: But *so far as is agreeable to what They call Scripture*. The Creed

is positive that the *Second* and *Third* Persons are *such* as the *First*; and immediately after specifies the Respects in which They are *such*. *Such* in Respect of their being *Eternal*; *such* in Respect of their being *uncreated*; *such* in Respect of their being *incomprehensible*, *Almighty*, *God*, and *Lord*. That is, all the three Persons are *equally*, and in the same Sense, *uncreated*, *eternal*, *incomprehensible*, *Almighty*, *God*, and *Lord*. This is plainly the Doctrine of the Creed; the Literal and Grammatical Sense of the Words. Now, to qualify absolute Propositions with Reserves and Limitations, in the manner the Doctor does, is not *Explaining* their Sense, but *Contradicting* it. Neither can This be called Subscribing in a Sense of which the Words are *capable*, but only *so far as is agreeable to what some call Scripture*: Which Rule of *Subscribing* is condemn'd by Those Gentlemen.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy-Ghost uncreate ——— and yet not three uncreated, but One uncreated. The Doctor here teaches The Subscriber to acknowledge every Person to be *uncreated* (*ἀκτιστος*) and yet, to say that there are not Three *uncreated* (*ἀκτιστοι*) Persons, but *One uncreated Person*; Which is a staring Contradiction: besides, it is owning Two of the Persons to be *Creatures*, in some Sense, which the Doctor at other Times studiously avoids. But He was here in great Straits; and was to venture upon Any thing, rather than admit what He has the utmost Aversion to, *Three Persons* to be *One uncreated Being*, or *God*.

He has no possible way of Reconciling the seeming *Contradiction* contain'd in his Comment, but by making a Distinction between *derived uncreatedness*, and *underived uncreatedness*: Which would have appeared so odd and fanciful, that He chose not to mention it in Terms, but only to hint it in generals.

als. What precludes This, and every other Pretence of That kind, is that the *Creed* plainly makes the *un-createdness* of the second and third Persons to be *such* as the *Father's* is, that is, of the *same kind*, and to be understood in the *same Sense*, there being no difference or distinction, in That Respect.

The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy-Ghost incomprehensible — And yet there are not Three incomprehensibles but One incomprehensible. The Doctor takes the same way with This as with the former Passage; and runs into the like *Contradiction* to avoid the admitting so shocking a Thing to Him, as the Notion of three Persons being *One Incomprehensible*; which is the *certain* Meaning of the *Creed*. I shall say no more to This, but refer the Reader to what I have observed upon the Passage preceding.

The Father Eternal, The Son Eternal, and the Holy-Ghost Eternal. And yet They are not Three Eternals, but One Eternal. Here the Words are so express for *Three Persons* being *One Eternal* (which the Doctor can by no means bear) that He had no way left but to change *They are not*, into *there are not*: Without considering that the *Subscriber* must give his *unfeigned Assent*, and *Consent* to *They are not*; and must so read in the publick Congregation. Besides This Inconvenience, which the Doctor seem'd to to be unapprized of; There is another which He was forced to run upon (contrary to his usual Caution) and That was to say, *There are not Three Eternal Persons*, hereby denying the *Eternity* of Two of Them. And yet *The Creed*, more than once, expressly asserts the *Coeternity* of all Three; and besides plainly teaches that the *Eternity* of the *Second* and *Third* Persons, is *such* as the *Father's* is. Nor will the Doctor's Distinction of a *derived* and *underived* Eternity

nity help Him in This matter : For the Sense of the Word *Eternity* has nothing to do with That Distinction, being but *one*, and importing neither more nor less than *beginningless* and *endless* Duration.

The Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy-Ghost Almighty: And yet They are not Three Almighties, but One Almighty. Here The Doctor again changes *They are not* into *There are not* : thereby signifying that the *Subscriber* cannot honestly assent to, or make use of *They are not* ; tho' He does not tell Him how to avoid the doing of it, solemnly, and in the Face of the publick Congregation.

I take no Notice of the Doctor's chusing Τεῖς παντοδυναμοι, rather than Τεῖς παντοκράτορες, because He will claim the Privilege of taking which He likes best : Otherwise the Greek Copies favor the Latter as much as the Former ; and the *Latin* Original is indifferent to either.

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy-Ghost is God: And yet They are not Three Gods, but One God. We have the same *Collusion* again practis'd ; in changing *They are not* into *there are not* ; only for the sake of avoiding what the *Creed* mainly intends to teach, that the *Three Persons are One God*. I shall not here repeat what I have before said : But shall only observe an *Omission* which the Doctor is guilty of, in not teaching the *Subscriber* how to reconcile the Contradiction of every Person being *a God* (for so it must be on his Principles) and yet not *Three Gods*. For tho' there be but *One Supreme God* (upon the Doctor's Hypothesis) yet one Supreme God, and Two inferior Gods, are *Three Gods*, in such a Sense as neither Scripture, nor Antiquity can ever allow. The like might be said of the next Paragraph, respecting *One Lord*, and *Three Lords*. I shall just take Notice of a slight inconsistency of the
Doctor,

Doctor, in explaining this Paragraph. To account for the *Holy-Ghost's* being here called *God*, He is forced to admit that He is represented in Scripture as *exercising Divine Power and Authority*: p. 435. But if we turn back to Prop. 25. p. 296. We are there told that the *Holy-Ghost*, in the New Testament is never expressly stiled *God*; because He is no where represented as sitting upon a Throne, or exercising Supreme Dominion &c. So that it seems, The Doctor can make it out either way; that the Scripture has, or has not, given Ground enough for stiling the *Holy-Ghost God*, just as Occasion serves. But to pass on.

In This Trinity, none is afore, or after Other. (Nihil prius aut Posterius. — or Nemo Primus aut Postremus. ἑδὲν πρῶτον ἢ ὕστερον. aliter ἑδὲς πρῶτος ἢ ἕχατος) but the whole Three Persons are Coeternal. The *Coeternity* could not be express'd in stronger Words than is here done, both *positively* and *negatively*.

If The Doctor and his Friends believe it, it is well: If not, it is very certain that They cannot honestly *Subscribe*, even upon their own Principles; for the Words are not *capable* of any *lower* Meaning.

None is greater or less than Another; but the whole Three Persons are — Coequal.

The Doctor's Comment upon the Words *none is greater* &c. is, that the *Second* and *Third* Persons are *every where* with the *First*, as They are *Always*. I doubt not but the sole Reason which led the Doctor into this *Remote*, and *strain'd* Construction, was his Apprehension that the Phrase *every where*, like the Word *Always*, might help Him to a *Double Entendre*, for the uses above mention'd.

But if *every where* be *capable* of two Meanings, the Words of the *Creed* are not so; *none greater or less*: And if They must be understood of *Presence*, They can signify nothing lower than This;

that all the Three Persons are equally *omnipresent*.

I am content with This Meaning ; And if it be consistent with the Doctor's *Hypothesis*, am very glad of it : Or if it be not ; Then He must be conceived to advise the *Subscriber* to subscribe in a Sense of which the Words are not *capable*.

After I had proceeded thus far, and had look'd a little forwards, I was much surprized to find the Doctor interpreting *Coequal* very differently from the Word's *None is Greater &c.* as if They did not Both mean the same Thing, first *negatively*, and then *positively* express'd. But The Doctor, it seems, stands by no Rules of interpreting. They are *Coequal* (says He *now*) in *such a Sense as one or more Persons can be equal to Another (from whom They derive their Being) by a plenary Communication of Power, Knowledge, Dignity &c.* He has the like come-off for the Words *equal to the Father as touching his Godhead* : that is, says He, *equal in such a Sense as a deriv'd Being can be.* I have before observed something of this general *Salvo*, for some other Passages : And indeed it is such a Sovereign *Salvo* for every difficulty, that He need not have made use of any other. In reality, it comes to no more than This, that He admits the Words and the Sense of them so far as consistent with his *own Hypothesis*, or his *own* sense of *deriving* Being. In the same way, a Man might *subscribe* to the Decrees of the Council of Trent, or to every Article of Pope *Pius's* Creed. For Instance : I believe *Saints may be worshipp'd*, but, in *such a Sense as Worship can be due to Saints.* I admit *Transubstantiation*, but in *such a Sense as it can be consistent with Scripture and Reason.* I admit *Prayers in an unknown Tongue* but in *such a Sense as can be reconciled with the 1. Cor. 14.* And thus we need not scruple any Thing. Apply the the same *Salvo* to the *Civil Oaths*, and it may serve

as well there, to elude and frustrate Them: And a Man may Swear to any King, without acknowledging his just Right or Title. It is but saying Thus; I believe such a Person to be the only *rightful* and *lawful* King of These Realms, in *such a Sense* as He *can be rightful and lawful*, upon my Principles, &c. And what may not a Man *swear*, or *subscribe* to in This loose method? Now in Truth, tho' This kind of *Collusion* is disguised by the Words *such a Sense*, as if there were a *certain Sense*, in which the Subscriber might fairly understand the Words, consistent with his own *Hypothesis*; yet it really amounts to no more than This, the subscribing *so far as is consistent with his own Opinions*. For a Man may make use of the same; *Salvo*, whether the Words be *capable* of any *such Sense*, or whether They be not. If they be *capable*, He is indeed bound up to *such Sense*: If not, He is free, having subscribed to them no farther than They *can be* so understood; which perhaps may not be at all. I cannot but from hence observe, how unfairly and unjustly the very worthy and learned Bishop of Oxford has been treated for *confounding* (as is pretended) these Two Things: Subscribing *so far as is agreeable to Scripture*; and subscribing *in such Sense as is agreeable to Scripture*. For however distinct these Two Things may be in the *general*, They are really *confounded* by Dr. Clarke Himself in this particular Case, as I have often observed. Neither will He ever be able to defend the Point of *Subscription* upon the *latter* only, without taking in the *former* also. His talking of *such Sense* seems only to be a *cover*, or plausible disguise for *so far as* (which has deceived his unwary Followers who have not seen so deep into This matter as He) and hence I conceive it is, that He has never *explicitly* condemn'd the subscribing with the reserve of *so far as is agreeable*; tho'

Others

Others of the Party, being ashamed to stand up for so unaccountable a Latitude, have indeed plainly rejected it; not being aware of the need They should have of it. But to return to the Creed.

God of the Substance of the Father begotten before the Worlds; and Man of the Substance of his Mother
 ——— *Perfect God, and Perfect Man.*

The Doctor did not think proper to take any notice of This Passage. I know not how any Words can be Stronger for the Son's having the same *Divine-Nature* with the Father, as much as He has the same *Humane-Nature* with his *Mother*: *Perfect God* and *Perfect Man*, having all that belongs to the *Nature* of Both. This is utterly repugnant to the *Arian Hypothesis*; and can no more be reconciled with it, than Light with Darkness.

We may now take leave of the Creed (called *Athanasian*) and proceed to the *Litany*.

O holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God, have mercy &c.

Here the Three Persons are all together invoked, and under the Style and Title of *One God*; directly Opposite to the Doctor's Principles. The Doctor has no way to evade their Force, but by understanding the Title of *One God* to belong to the Father only. His Sense is This.

“O holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, Three
 “ Persons, and One God, viz. the Father, have mercy
 &c. This *Collusion* The Subscriber is to practise in his most solemn Devotions: excluding Two of the Persons from the *One Godhead* here, tho' He had address'd Them both under the Title of *God* in the two preceding Petitions; and tho' the Epithets *Holy, Blessed, and Glorious*, are equally attributed to all Three, in the very same Petition. If This be to *pray with the Understanding* (as the Doctor pretends it is) Let
 it

it rather be the wish of every Honest Man to have *less Understanding*, and *more Grace* than to trifle in This manner with the Tremendous Deity.

In the Collect for the 3^d Sunday in Advent, we thus address our Blessed Saviour.

O Lord Jesu Christ — who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever One God World without End. Any one, at first sight, may here see that the Title of *One God*, is not attributed to the Father only, but to all the Three Persons: contrary to the Doctor's Principles. The Doctor does not attempt to show that the Words are *capable* of any other meaning. Only He draws up Another *Form* suitable to his own *Hypothesis*, and little akin to the Words in the *Collect*; substituting That in the Room of the other. If the *Subscriber* can content Himself with such shuffling in his solemn Prayers, let Him look to it.

There is just such Another Passage in the Conclusion of the Collect for *Christmas-Day* (which the Doctor has omitted) and there is Another in the Collect for the 6th Sunday after *Epiphany* (which He has also omitted) running thus.

With Thee O Father, and Thee O Holy-Ghost, He (Christ) liveth and reigneth ever One God World without End. Here, whether Christ alone, or all the Three Persons (and one of These it must be) be called *One God*; it is equally repugnant to the Doctor's Principles. And He cannot subscribe to This, in such a Sense as the Words will bear (for They cannot bear his Sense) but only so far as is consistent with his Principles: Which is not assenting to the Words of the Prayer, but to something else of his own inventing. The like may be said of the Collects for *Septuagesima*, and the first Sunday in *Lent*, and *Good-Friday*, twice, and *Easter day*, and *Ascension-day*,
and

and the *Sunday* after; all which the Doctor has omitted out of his *Collection*: An omission indeed not worth the mentioning, were it not that the *Modest Pleader* has been pleased to object the smallness of the Number 27, which we see, might have been enlarged; and were it not an Aggravation of the great Sin of prevaricating with God and Man, to consider how often it must be repeated in the yearly Course of the Prayers.

The Doctor takes notice of the Collect for *Whit-Sunday*, and shifts it off in a loose Manner: and so passes on to *Trinity-Sunday*, dealing much the same way with That also. He omits the Collect for *St. Matthew's Day*; Which is more *express* and *full* against his Principles than either of the Two Former. I shall pass over all the other Places in our Liturgy, or Articles, except one, with which I shall shut up This Chapter. It is the proper Preface for *Trinity-Sunday*, in the *Communion-Office*; running thus:

O Lord, Almighty, everlasting God: Who art One God, One Lord, not one only Person, but Three Persons in One Substance. For That which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy-Ghost, without any Difference or inequality.

The Doctor here pleasantly says, that *There is no Passage in the whole Service so apt to be understood in a wrong Sense as This*; meaning, I suppose, so apt to be understood in the Sense the Church intended, and so hard to be perverted to Any other. And it must indeed be thought a very clear and full Passage on the *Orthodox* side, When a Person of the Doctor's Abilities, in this kind, and after He had worked his way thro' the *Nicene*, and *Athanasian* Creeds, (besides a great Part of the Liturgy) began at length to feel Himself non-pluss'd by it, and almost at the Point of Confessing it. His first endeavour was to
perplex

perplex and puzzle the Church's Sense, ; and next to introduce his own.

He pretends that the Words, *Lord, Almighty, everlasting God*, are *Personal*, and must be understood of *One Person* only, tho' He cannot but know that every one of Those Words are used in the *Athanasian Creed* (to say nothing of the Liturgy) of all the Three Persons taken together ; and They are here expressly declared to belong, not to *one Person only*, but to *Three Persons in one Substance*. The Words, *who art*, He thinks, cannot be properly applied to more Persons than one. But that They are so applied here is manifest, and by Those who were competent Judges of Propriety : And if He likes it not, why should He *Subscribe*? When He comes to give us his own Meaning, He never attempts to show (good Reason why) in what Sense, consistent with his Principles, a Subscriber may believe *Three Persons in one Substance*, and that the same *Glory* belongs to all, *without any Difference, or Inequality*. It would be trifling, to take Notice of what He endeavours to put upon a *Subscriber*, in order to satisfy his Conscience in one of the most serious and solemn Things in the World. I can never give my self leave to think that He could at all satisfy Himself in it ; upon second, and cooler Thoughts. Indeed, I should ask the Doctor's Pardon for dwelling so long upon those extravagant Explications ; which, I doubt not, He now heartily despises, as well as I. Neither ought They to be any longer imputed to Him, who has expunged Them, and cast them off, from the Time his second Edition has appeared. But since his Disciples and Followers are still proud of his *Refuse*, and set a value upon his *Trifles*, which He has too much Sense to do Himself ; Since They insist upon it that, all the Expressions of our *Publick-Forms*

are, at least, *capable* of a Sense consistent with their Principles, and appeal, for Proof of it (having indeed nothing else to appeal to) to the Doctor's Performances on That Head: in a Word, since They have been pleased to rest the whole Cause of *Subscription* upon the Doctor's *Explications*, it was necessary for me to take under Examination Those Things upon which such a Stress was laid; unless the Doctor Himself would have been so kind (for which I should have heartily thank'd Him) as to speak more plainly in This Matter than He has thought proper to do. One *Half-Sheet*, one small *Advertisement* from his Hand, to discountenance This kind of *Subscription* would have done the Business at once, and have saved me the Labour of doing any Thing. The Credit of his *Name* was, in a manner, all it had to stand upon. And had He but pleased to take off the Countenance of his *Authority*; his *Reasons* should have been left, to stand or fall by Themselves. But as the Case now is, (and as the Author of the *Remarks* observes) that the whole Party are gone after Him, and still persist in the Doctor's *First* Thoughts relating to *Subscription*; neither has the Doctor took any sufficient Care to reclaim Them, or to bring Them back; The Cause is too important to wait his slow Motions, or to be left any longer in suspense. The Glory of God, the Honour of our most holy Religion, and the Security of Church and State, call for our best Endeavors to root out, if possible, those false and pernicious Principles, and to reestablish the Matter of *Subscription* upon its true, and solid Foundations. How far I have been able to contribute to so good an End, must be left to the Reader's judgement. My Design however was well aimed: And This is my Apology

pology for disturbing the learned Doctor, late, and unwillingly, on This Head.

I shall now briefly sum up the particulars of what has been advanced above, for the Reader's clearer apprehending of it, as well as the better retaining it.

1. The Church of England requires Subscription not to *Words*, but *Things*; to *Propositions* contained in her Publick-Forms.

2. Subscribers are obliged not to *Silence* or *Peace* only, but to a serious *Belief* of what They subscribe to.

3. Subscribers must believe it True in That particular Sense which the Church intended; (so far as That Sense may be known) For the Church can expect no less; The design being to preserve *One Uniform Tenour* of Faith, to preclude *Diversity* of *Opinions*, to have Her *own Explications*, and none other (as to Points determin'd) taught and inculcated; and to tie Men up from spreading, or receiving Doctrines contrary to the publick Determinations. These and the like Ends cannot be at all answer'd by *Subscription*, unless the Subscriber give his *Assent* to the Church's Forms in the Church's Sense; that is, in the Sense of the *Compilers* and *Imposers*.

4. The Sense of the *Compilers* and *Imposers* is to be judged of from the *plain, usual, and literal* signification of Words; and from their Intention, Purpose or Design, however known: The Rule for *understanding* the *Publick-Forms* being the same as for *understanding Oaths, Laws, Injunctions*, or any other *Forms* or *Writings* whatever.

5. Where either the *Words* themselves, or the *Intention* (much more where Both) is plain and evident; there the Sense of the *Imposers* is fully known; and there is no room left for a *Subscriber* (as such) to

put any *contrary*, or *different* Sense upon the Publick-Forms.

6. If Words be capable of *several* meanings, but yet *certainly* exclude *This*, or *That* particular meaning; a Subscriber cannot honestly take the Forms in *That* meaning which is *specially excluded*. For, This would be subscribing against the Sense of the Church at the same Time that He professes his Agreement with it.

7. It may be *certainly* known that Any *Arian* Sense of our Publick-Forms, is such a Sense as our Church *intended* to exclude, and has excluded, in as full and strong *positive* Terms as the wit of Man is able to devise. And all Men of Sense must allow, that when *Compilers* and *Imposers* have done the utmost They could, and as far as any Words can reach, to express the *Catholick* Doctrine of the *Trinity*; They may and must be supposed to mean That very Doctrine which They have industriously laboured to express, and none other.

8. And that it may not be pretended by our Modern *Arians*, that their Sense is not *Arian* (which nevertheless it certainly is) it is farther evident, and hath been shown, that the main particulars of *their Scheme* (call it what They please) is *specially excluded*, both by the plain Words, and undoubted *Intention* of our Publick-Forms.

9. Therefore none of the Advocates for the *New-Scheme* can fairly or honestly subscribe to our Church's *Forms*, tho' They could invent a Sense for Them consistent with their own Principles: it being evident that any such Sense is contrary to our Church's Sense, and to the Intention of the *Imposers*.

10. The *Pleas* and *Excuses* devised to justify the subscribing in a Sense contrary to, or different from, the *known* Sense of the *Imposers*, being founded either

on

on false presumptions, or weak reasonings, are of no weight or significancy; but the *Arian* Subscriber must be blameable for going counter to the *known Sense* of the Church, even tho' the Words were capable of another meaning.

11. Yet, upon Examination, it appears that many Expressions of our *Publick-Forms* are really not capable of any Sense consistent with the *New-Scheme*. And therefore, if the Patrons of it subscribe to their *own Sense* (as They must be conceived to do) They subscribe to a Sense which is *no Sense* of our Publick-Forms at all, on any Supposition.

12. The Subscription therefore of Those Gentlemen (however gloss'd over with the pretence of subscribing in *such Sense as is agreeable to* (what They call) *Scripture*, really amounts to no more than subscribing *so far as is in their Opinion agreeable to Scripture*. Which way of subscribing not only defeats every End of Subscription, and stands condemn'd by our *Laws*, and by the *express* Resolution of our *Judges*, but is also absurd in it self; as leaving room for any prevarication whatever, in the matter of *Oaths*, or *Tests*; and for subscribing the *Romish Confession*, or even the *Alcoran*, or Any Thing; and is moreover *explicitely* condemn'd, even by the generality of Those who plead for *Arian-Subscription*.

THE END.



